

# The John Day cattle drives

Two thousand head came through town

By Richard Hanners  
Blue Mountain Eagle

It's been more than a decade since the big cattle drives came through downtown John Day. Ranchers with divided property, such as the Holliday family, brought their cattle north from pasture land in Bear Valley to the John Day Valley for calving, Darrel Holliday said.

When the drives started around 1958, five ranches moved their cattle cross-country west of Highway 395, entering the valley west of town at Screech Alley Loop. The growth of subdivisions put an end to

that route, Holliday said.

The 38-mile trip from Bear Valley to John Day took three days. Cows were put up in 40-acre holding pastures first at Izee Road and again about 9 miles south of Canyon City. Drivers guided the cattle down South Canyon Boulevard to Main Street where they took a right-hand turn and headed to the Holliday ranch east of town.

"They didn't much like it heading to Starr Ridge the first day — they kept turning around," Darrel said. "Then the second day, they were scared by barking dogs and cars."

The Hollidays typically chose a weekend in mid-February — driving the cattle through town on Sunday and separating cows at the ranch on Monday.

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The Holliday Ranch cattle drives used to travel through the streets of John Day once a year. Here the Holliday crew is lined up headed east on Main Street in John Day.

## Celebrating agriculture

Blue Mountain Eagle

Each American farmer feeds more than 144 people — a dramatic increase from 25 people in the 1960s. Quite simply, American agriculture is doing more — and doing it better. As the world population soars, there is an even greater demand for the food and fiber produced in the United States.

National Ag Day recognizes and celebrates the abundance provided by American agriculture. Every spring, producers, agricultural associations, corporations, universities, government agencies and others across the country join together in recognition — and appreciation — of agriculture in our country.

### Did you know?

- Honeybee workers must visit 2 million flowers to make one pound of honey.
- Each worker honey bee makes 1/12th teaspoon of honey in its lifetime.
- An acre of trees

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**Grant County Chamber of Commerce**

would like to recognize the hard work our local ranchers and farmers do for our county this Ag Day. Thank you for everything!




## Grant County ag through the years



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Grant County 4-H'ers get a briefing on Grant County agriculture in 1964.

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